## FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI PREPARED REMARKS AT DIGITAL TEXTBOOK WORKSHOP WASHINGTON, D.C. MARCH 29, 2012

This meeting presents a unique opportunity, because we have gathered senior leaders from the different parts of the digital textbook ecosystem: traditional publishers, platform developers, device manufacturers, connectivity providers – both in-school and mobile, and educators.

Today we want to focus on two things.

First, the opportunities of digital textbooks.

And second, the challenges to universal digital textbooks, many of which have been identified on our agenda: affordability, content, interoperability, connectivity, technology, and state policies. We know there are other challenges not on the agenda such as accessibility for students with disabilities.

Now is the perfect time for this diverse group to have this discussion about overcoming these challenges and seizing the opportunities of digital textbooks.

Earlier this month, the man sitting to my side, TPG Capital CEO Jim Coulter, along with Columbia University President Lee Bollinger, Common Sense Media founder and CEO Jim Steyer, and former Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, announced the formation of the LEAD Commission. This expert panel was established to identify opportunities where technology can drive improved educational performance and develop a blueprint for action, which will be released this November.

In a few minutes, you will see a presentation from Jim on how transitioning to digital textbooks is a key focus of the LEAD Commission. The Commission will be drilling much deeper into this issue, and Secretary Duncan and I will be looking to LEAD's work closely.

I'm so pleased that the FCC is hosting this important discussion.

This is not the first time the Commission has convened industry leaders to discuss harnessing the power of communications technology to benefit the American people.

And it's not the first time the Commission has promoted improvements in education through technology.

Reed Hundt is here. Thanks in large part to his vision, the FCC has been working since the early days of the commercial Internet to bring the benefits of online learning to America's schools.

Our E-Rate program – established under Reed's leadership in the 1990s – has helped connect almost every classroom in America to the Internet.

Today, the FCC is focused on broadband and seizing the opportunities of high-speed connectivity to grow our economy, unleash innovation, and tackle challenges like education.

We've modernized our E-Rate program for the broadband era, enabling us to begin seizing the opportunities of mobile connectivity.

And we're moving forward on other initiatives as well, one of which is obviously our Digital Textbook Collaborative with the Department of Education.

Other nations like South Korea and Turkey are racing to seize the opportunities of digital textbooks.

We need to step up our efforts to realize the promise of this new technology in the U.S.

That's why Secretary Duncan and I challenged states and industry to drive national adoption of digital textbooks in the next five years and why we are here today.

We want to come out of today's meeting with a couple of things:

One, a boost to the LEAD Commission's important work – so that it can in the near future take steps that will make a material positive difference in moving digital textbooks from idea to reality. The LEAD Commission filling a real need. Secretary Duncan and I looking forward to supporting its efforts and incorporating its work.

And two, accelerated discussions among stakeholders, including the stakeholders in this room – with a goal to having classroom-ready products to describe by the time kids go back-to school.

Again, thank you all for participating. I look forward to today's discussion and working in partnership with you in the days ahead.